



For Immediate Release

Monday, March 5, 2018

Contact

Sarah Bascom, sarah@bascomllc.com, 850.294.6636

Kelsey Swithers, kelsey@bascomllc.com, 941.400.8183

Statement from Everglades Foundation CEO on DEP Order on EAA Reservoir Project

CEO Eric Eikenberg: "We are Closer Today to a Solution Than Ever Before"

Palmetto Bay, Fla. – The Everglades Foundation CEO Eric Eikenberg today issued the following statement in response to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection’s approval of the Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA) reservoir project.

“After decades of persistent droughts in the Everglades, sea grass die-offs in Florida Bay, and algae-causing pollution of the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie rivers, we are closer today to a solution than ever before.

“We thank Department of Environmental Protection Secretary Noah Valenstein and South Florida Water Management District Executive Director Ernie Marks for their leadership and for fulfilling the expedited schedule of last year’s Senate Bill 10.

“On average, the EAA Reservoir, working in tandem with other authorized projects, will cut algae-causing discharges by approximately 60 percent, send an additional 370,000 acre-feet of clean, fresh water south toward the Everglades each year, and increase the annual flow of water through Shark River Slough by 210,000 acre-feet and Taylor Slough by 19,000 acre-feet, providing much-needed relief for Florida Bay.

“With this order, we are reassured of the state’s commitment to each of these objectives and its willingness to undertake additional activities, including additional stormwater treatment areas if necessary, to achieve water quality standards, instead of reducing project benefits.

“We must come together and speak as one to ensure Congressional authorization of this vital project. We look forward to the South Florida Water Management District Governing Board’s consideration of this critical project later this week, so that it can be sent to Washington, D.C., for authorization.”

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